

Appl. No. : 10/553,099
Filed : October 13, 2005

REMARKS

In response to the Office Action mailed May 11, 2007, Applicant has amended the application as above. No new matter is added by the amendments as discussed below. Applicant respectfully requests the entry of the amendments and reconsideration of the application in view of the amendments and the remarks set forth below.

Discussion of Claim Amendments

Claims 3, 4, 11, 18, 20 and 21 have been cancelled, without prejudice. Claims 1, 2, 5-10, 12-17, and 19 have been amended. Upon the entry of the amendments, Claims 1, 2, 5-10, 12-17, and 19 are pending in this application. The amendments to Claim 1 are supported, for example, by original Claims 4 and 11. Claims 5, 7, 9 and 12 have been rewritten in independent form. The amendment to the remaining claims are merely for clarification and do not narrow the scope of protection. Thus, the amendments to the claims do not introduce any new matter. Entry of the amendments is respectfully requested.

Discussion of Specification Objection

The Examiner objected to the specification as the abstract contains more than 150 words. In reply, the abstract has been amended accordingly. Withdrawal of the objection is respectfully requested.

Discussion of Claim Objections

The Examiner has objected to Claims 2-21 because of certain informalities. The Examiner suggested changing "Claim" to "claim." In reply, Applicant amended the claims as suggested by the Examiner.

Discussion of Patentability of Pending Claims

Claims 5-15, 17, 20 and 21 have been indicated to be allowable over the prior art of record if rewritten in independent form. As discussed above, Claims 5, 7, 9 and 12 have been rewritten in independent form. In view of the above, Applicant respectfully submits that Claims 5, 7, 9 and 12 are allowable over the prior art of record.

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Claims 1-3 and 16 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Iino (U.S. Patent No. 4,776,165) in view of Fredriksen, et al. (U.S. Patent No. 5,679,085). Claim 4 has been rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Iino in view of Fredriksen, and further in view of JU 1978-104886. Claims 18 and 19 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Iino in view of Fredriksen, and further in view of Hisao, et al. (JP 6265013). In order to expedite the prosecution of this application, Claims 3, 4 and 18 have been cancelled, and all of the features of Claims 4 and 11 have been incorporated into Claim 1. In view of the above, Applicant respectfully submits that Claim 1 is allowable over the prior art of record. The remaining pending claims depend from base Claim 1, 5, 7, 9 or 12, and further define additional technical features of the present invention. In view of the patentability of their base claims, and in further view of their additional technical features, Applicant respectfully submits that the dependent claims are patentable over the prior art.

No Disclaimers or Disavowals

Although the present communication may include alterations to the application or claims, or characterizations of claim scope or referenced art, the Applicants are not conceding in this application that previously pending claims are not patentable over the cited references. Rather, any alterations or characterizations are being made to facilitate expeditious prosecution of this application. The Applicants reserve the right to pursue at a later date any previously pending or other broader or narrower claims that capture any subject matter supported by the present disclosure, including subject matter found to be specifically disclaimed herein or by any prior prosecution. Accordingly, reviewers of this or any parent, child or related prosecution history shall not reasonably infer that the Applicants have made any disclaimers or disavowals of any subject matter supported by the present application.

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CONCLUSION

In view of Applicant's foregoing amendments and remarks, it is respectfully submitted that the present application is in condition for allowance. Should the Examiner have any remaining concerns which might prevent the prompt allowance of the application, the Examiner is respectfully invited to contact the undersigned at the telephone number appearing below.

Respectfully submitted,

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